



# GILA NEWSLETTER

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## FROM THE COMMANDER: SUCCESSFUL REINTEGRATION OF B/9E & REAR-D BACK INTO THE BATTALION



## CSM's CORNER

The Battalion is wrapping up business in Kosovo and we cannot wait to finish. You will begin to notice team members trickling back to Schweinfurt. After the reunion of our soldiers with families and soldiers with loved ones and friends, we turn our attention to putting the pieces of our puzzle back together. One of the most important goals for 9E's return is to successfully reintegrate Bravo Company, the Rear Detachment, and the rest of the team that deployed into a strong, cohesive combat family-oriented unit.

I think reintegration has challenges, but I know we are more than capable of successfully breaching any obstacles in our path. Critical areas that we need to consciously keep in tune with are perceptions that one group was more successful than another; unit cohesion; adequate recovery time; and team building. The keys for success in the above mentioned areas are time and patience. We must take the time at every level to put forth the effort to make this work. I will ensure soldiers have adequate time for recovery and families. I need everyone to be patient and allow the reintegration process to work as the team rebuilds.

All of us must guard against the 'we vs. they' mentality. Although the missions were different for each of the separated components of the battalion, the sacrifices were just as great. We as the "9th Engineers" succeeded in this deployment, not merely TF 9E, Bravo Outlaws, or the Rear Detachment, but all of us. Furthermore, I believe it is only prudent that everyone needs to be congratulated for their part in this deployment- soldiers and family members alike. We all have made it through this difficult time. Now we must refocus our attentions in order to reestablish a 9E team mentality. The final step in this process will be the formal deactivation of Rear D in January. No longer are we separated into components, 9E is back together.

Just as we must come together collectively as a battalion, we also must come together as individuals. I am firmly committed to the policy of "buddy teams." Everyone needs a buddy. Whether the buddy is a spouse or another soldier, everyone has a buddy to look after them. Each of us must remember the telltale signs that warn us our buddy is in need of help. It is not a maturity issue; it is a safety and common sense issue. Get used to the idea of a buddy system because it will become a positive part of everyone's lives.

### REINTEGRATION

For the past several months the 9E Team has been executing split operations and will soon be reintegrating back into one team in the same place. As we redeploy back we will reintegrate with family and loved ones and the soldiers who played a key part in the battalion's success. What is important is that every part of the 9E Team, Rear-D, FRG, and many others were vital to the battalion having a great deployment to Kosovo. The soldiers, family members, loved ones, and the agencies in the community sacrificed for the common good to ensure the 9E Team was successful.

The 9E Team is winding down a difficult mission and will conduct a very busy recovery operation. That means providing time and predictability to reintegrate with our families and loved ones and the command is committed to that goal. Everyone single soldier and family member is an important and vital part that make up the 9E Team. Last but not least, it means reintegration with the systems we developed during our deployment with the systems we normally use in garrison that will enable us to focus on and maintain readiness.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

HHC/9E.....	page 2
A/9E.....	page 3
B/9E.....	page 4
C/9E.....	page 5
A/94E.....	page 6
Chaplain's Corner.....	page 7
Scenes from KFOR 4A.....	pages 7 & 8





## HHC/9E: Headhunters

Well, we warned you—redeployment would be upon us before you knew it...and here it is! The first major chunk of soldiers are en route to Rear Detachment as we write. For the rest of us it's "14 days and a wake up!" The manifests have been prepared and the return orders processed. One by one we are wishing our soldiers good luck and sending them home to Schweinfurt. The Personnel Actions Center (PAC, or S1, for short) has been hit especially hard...they've dwindled away from a robust section of nine to a skeleton crew of six soldiers. Specialist Dannia Pena left us last month to attend the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) in Grafenwohr; and with just a little good luck, she will graduate at the top of her class on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Specialist Jared Snow left shortly after to get ready to attend college in Arizona. And to top it off, Staff Sergeant Garcia left two weeks ago to attend the Equal Opportunity Course. Meanwhile the S1 is getting showered with a lot of work to include last minute awards and NCO evaluation reports.

The two cooks that deployed with us to Kosovo, Specialist Saladin Tucker-bey and Sergeant James Galaz are on their way home now; as are Specialist Evelyn Ramirez, Specialist Norbert Dioso, and Specialist Anthony Elrod. HHC's advance party will be back shortly and we wish them a successful and happy reunion! They'll be returning almost simultaneously with B/9E – the first main body of the 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers to board the planes and busses for Central Region. With all of the soldiers heading back home, we need to start focusing on the important task of reestablishing the buddy system that proved successful prior to our deployment. We also must begin the process of rebuilding the "9E Team" mentality. Once we get back it will be a furious charge to block leave as we prepare for the remainder of the Battalion to return and then go full-speed through reconsolidation, recovery, and finally, relaxation. By the time block leave is over and the Rear Detachment is reintegrated on January 6<sup>th</sup>, we should be back together as one solid team again.

Lastly, the ALOC (S1 and S4) and the rest of the company want to wish a prompt recovery to Mrs. Natalie Carroll who injured her leg earlier this week. She is the wife Captain Scott Carroll, our S4, who returned to Central Region shortly afterwards. As we work towards reintegration of all the soldiers coming home, please help remember to stay safe. We are all looking forward to seeing you very soon. Until next week...*Headhunters!*



*Staff Sergeant David Garcia receives a chest full of metal and a certificate of participation in the NATO Kosovo Campaign*



*Specialist Olga Maldonado and Sergeant Michelle Nabity work on a HMMWV. We close of shop this week in maintenance! Any more broken vehicles (and there aren't many) will be passed on to our replacements.*





## A/9E: Breach Hell!

Alpha Company is at it again, with a busy schedule that allows for no breaks. No rest doesn't seem to faze the Apaches, because the current mission is redeployment. As Halloween has just passed, the Apaches paid special attention to the fact that this is the last holiday that they will be separated from their loved ones in Germany. Looking back at all of the missions Alpha Company completed while in Kosovo, we really have something to be proud of. The sappers that Breach Hell enhanced several other units' areas of operation by upgrading their living quarters, defensive positions, and roadways. This doesn't even take into consideration the entire time we were doing that, our soldiers were conducting force protection here on Camp Bondsteel and acting as the QRF for the entire MNB(E).

As the soldiers begin returning to Germany, give them a pat on the back for a job well done. I know we really appreciated all of the support we got from Rear D and all of our friends and family in Germany. Here is what the platoons were up to this week:

1<sup>st</sup> Platoon finished their last week as Mission Platoon. During the week, they provided the Camp Able Sentry Escort and Slatina Airport escort. CPL Brown left Kosovo on Thursday, headed back to Germany to prepare for PLDC. LTC Idlet presented CPL Brown his Kosovo awards and also an ARCOM for his outstanding performance while in Kosovo. The platoon finished packing their MILVAN and prepared for their last force protection cycle.

The Dirty Deuce spent the week putting the finishing touches on packing their Milvan in order to deploy to Germany. Second platoon took special care in packing their equipment so that the inventories we have to do when we get back go very smoothly

Happy Halloween from the sappers of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. The days continue to grow shorter as our duties supporting the people of Kosovo draw to an end. We continue to work on maintaining our vehicles and continue to pack up equipment and belongings in preparation for redeployment to Germany. SPC Robinson will reenlist on November 1<sup>st</sup>, helping the army out in the long run. Several members of the Platoon headed to Gnjilane today for a much-anticipated opportunity to shop on the local economy for souvenirs. For those of you in Germany and the States, rest assured that your loved ones are in high spirits and greatly look forward to coming home in time for the holidays. You can be very proud of all that we have accomplished over the last six months. Backbone!

Only a couple of weeks left until the Apaches can say we have completed our mission here in Kosovo. Keep us in your thoughts while we continue to Breach Hell!



*CPL Brown receives his Kosovo awards from LTC Idlet prior to his departure*







## B/9E: Outlaws

Dear Outlaw Families,

This will be the last company newsletter from Kosovo. The advanced party (ADVON) left today for Camp Bondsteel, and they will be home when this newsletter is published. The farewell of the ADVON made us all realize that our time is coming short, yet we still have a ton of work. The ADVON also realized that they have a ton of work to assist the main body in their redeployment. OK, I understand ADVON / main body, who cares? The only real questions in everyone's mind is when are we coming home, what will our schedule be when we arrive, and what is the schedule immediately after we get home. Well, here are the answers as we know them. The soldiers normally leave Camp Montieth in the afternoon and are transported to Camp Bondsteel for out processing. They stay overnight at Camp Bondsteel and leave sometime the next day for the airport. The soldiers arrive in Germany and are bussed to Schweinfurt in normal military fashion. What I mean is that we will most likely arrive in the late night to early morning hours. The ADVON will soon arrive, and the main body will follow close behind. When the soldiers arrive, they will immediately go to the company area to turn in their weapons. Single soldiers will be assigned rooms, and will take their 7 day box of house hold goods out of storage. Once we have accountability and single soldiers are taken care of (about 30 minutes); we will be bussed over to Finney Gym on Conn Barracks. We will march into the gym and meet you there. Since the ceremony will be likely be in the dawn hours, most of the company will have that day off. Some soldiers may have to stay at work on the arrival day to receive their household good shipments. The household goods and POV shipments are scheduled for the middle of November, coinciding with the return of the ADVON and Main Body arrivals. Regardless of the situation, we will have normal work call on very next day. The normal work call formation is at 0630 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday and the day will end at 1700 or earlier. The normal work call on Thursdays will be at 0600 and the day will end at 1500 or earlier. We will continue with normal work weeks until block leave, but will not work on weekends. Many people are asking, why we are going right back to work. The reason is two fold. The first reason is safety. We have been separated for quite some time and it is better to reintegrate slowly and get accustomed to a normal routine. Soldiers have also been separated from alcohol and driving for quite some time, and the same rule applies. A slow integration is better and safer. The second reason is that we have quite a bit of work to do in getting the company's equipment ready for future operations. The vehicles have been sitting there for 7 months, and have not moved.

We have equipment spread over several locations. Consolidating the equipment and maintaining the vehicles will take time. We are required to get these systems in place before going on block leave, and block leave is our ultimate goal. Now for some good news. Brown and Root Services, the company that takes care of our food, fuel and housing, received a contract to help us turn in equipment. The contract will allow each of us to come back together. As of right now, no Outlaws will have to stay in Kosovo to turn in equipment. We just have to continue to push on and continue the mission of coming home.

God Bless,  
CPT Bill Lash



*CPT Lash finally says farewell to the church*



*SPC Cardona with the Gnjilane children for the last time*





## C/9E: Dawgs of War

This week the Dawgs of War made great strides in the process of getting our soldiers home. We received the ADVON from Alpha Company, 82nd Engineers, and familiarized them with Bondsteel operations. We were also able to sign over the company operations building and all of our billets, upon their main bodies arrival on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October. The down side to this is that we are living in tents for the remainder of the deployment. Unfortunately, this limits are normal access to computers and phones and will make it more difficult for our soldiers to stay in contact with their loved ones for the next couple of weeks.

While the move into the tents does present some hardships for our soldiers for the next two weeks, it holds a significance that overrides any inconvenience. The last time our soldiers saw “tent city” as we’ve come to call it, they were the advanced party, beginning their rotation in Kosovo. This time the tents signify the final stage of the rotation and we can finally say that we are going to be home soon.

For some the redeployment has come a bit sooner than previously planned. SGT’s Flakes, SGT Smith and SPC Paez left Camp Bondsteel to attend PLDC in Vilseck. SSG Neff returned home to prepare supply issues for the company’s return and easy reintegration into Schweinfurt community.

Reintegration is on everyone’s mind as our return date approaches. It is important that both soldiers and family members address the sensitive issues that redeployment creates. The community chaplain has been contacted in Schweinfurt and is available for any problems that families and soldiers might run into before the main body redeploys. Charlie Company’s Chaplain will be returning with the main body.



*Dawgs of War improving their GT scores*

Everyone in Charlie Company is excited about the return and expectations are high. Remember that reintegration is a process that takes time and understanding. As a company we plan on doing our part by ensuring that soldiers will not start work before 06:30 and will not be at work after 17:00.

We are counting the days. God bless and we will see you soon.



*Building the roadway extension*







## A/94E: Warriors

This week saw the Warriors continuing to prepare for redeployment to Hohenfels, Germany. The Warriors could be seen packing MILVANS, cleaning and packing their personal equipment, and turning in excess equipment no longer needed to accomplish the mission. On Tuesday, a number of Warriors visited the Kamena Glava Primary School and handed out donated toys, clothes, and school supplies to the many children. The soldiers were popular and the gifts were much appreciated by all. This was our last visit to the school before heading home and the soldiers enjoyed it as much, if not more, than the children. As redeployment fast approaches, thoughts and plans are being made for the successful reintegration into the Warrior, Wolverine, and 130<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade families. The Warrior leadership, along with the Wolverine leadership, is committed to the detachment's successful and healthy reintegration. Soldiers deployed to Kosovo continue to undergo reunion preparation for our eventual homecoming. We are looking forward to returning to Hohenfels and reuniting with our families and friends!



*LTC Idlet presents SPC Alsip with his Kosovo Campaign Medal and NATO award*



*Warrior soldiers at the Kamena Glava Primary School watch as the students choose their toys*



*Warrior soldiers pose outside of the Kamena Glava Primary School after distributing donated toys, clothing, and school supplies*





## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

### Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The same way you met the standards in Kosovo is the way you need to meet the standards in Garrison and at home. In this issue, I will be talking about sexual integrity. There is zero tolerance for sexual irresponsibility!!! Let me explain to you what I mean by sexual irresponsibility. The bottom line is that we will not tolerate sexual promiscuity or adultery; Be warned also that this kind of behavior can lead to sexually transmitted diseases. The AIDS epidemic in Africa is literally wiping out a whole generation in some countries! There are also many other dreadful STDs out there. Why do people go around unprotected spreading diseases that they know they have? I put out to all the soldiers that the best thing, by far, to do is to abstain from sexual contact, and if they refuse that, then they need to have protection. This is what I share with the single soldiers. When it comes to married soldiers, then you had better abstain unless it is your spouse. If you don't heed my words of wisdom, then you could be facing UCMJ action one day! The best way to avoid adultery is to make up your mind now that you will never ever do it! Then you make absolutely sure that you never put yourself in a situation where you might be tempted. For example being totally drunk in some nightclub without your spouse. If you ask me, I think that is pretty stupid! Yet, as a Chaplain, I deal with situations like this all the time in Garrison. It's a crying shame! Adult soldiers and spouses acting like out of control teenagers. We have got to do better than that when we get back in Garrison. When we get back, my priority will be the strengthening of your marriage and family. You need to understand that I can help you no matter what the situation is, but I can't read your mind. You need to tell me what the problem is. If I personally can't help you, I know that I can find someone who can. Do not be sexually irresponsible. A few minutes of pleasure can lead to a lifetime of pain and suffering! I leave you with the words of Dwight D. Eisenhower: "Responsible citizenship in a free country means what it says.

It means conducting one's self responsibly, in the interest of others as well as self." May the loving arms of our Heavenly Father guide and protect you and your family!!!

JAMES W. BLOUNT  
Chaplain (CPT) USA

### Scenes from KFOR 4A



*CPT Carroll, BN Supply Officer, receives his Kosovo awards prior to departing to back to Schweinfurt*



*HHC's Specialist Joshua Kimzey gets stuck while Specialist Evelyn Ramirez and Doc Samuel Delgado III watch on*





## Scenes from KFOR 4A (continued)



*Captain Kevin Stoll, displaying his mean face, and First Lieutenant Andy Olson speak with the principal of HHC's sponsorship school in Ferizaj*



*The weekly magazine for soldiers of MNB-E is "Guardian East." This magazine provides an insight look at the daily life of soldiers here in Kosovo, both US and allied soldiers are represented in the publication. Normally, you'll find soldiers flipping through its pages in the DFAC or around the offices. Many 9E soldiers have graced its pages in the past. Two include SPC Ramirez (HHC) and SPC Adams (B CO) on this cover.*



*Members of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Alpha Company, pose after a game of "touch" football*

Editor in Chief  
The Gila Adjutant

TASK FORCE 9TH ENGINEER (C)

